

Message Text

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SUBJ: MINIC ON RELATIONS WITH AUSTRIA

1. DEC 26 FOREIGN POLICY REVIEW PRESENTED TO FEDERAL ASSEMBLY YUGOSLAV FORSEC MINIC AGAIN ATTACKED AUSTRIAN "UNWILLINGNESS TO FULFILL ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS." HE REPEATED YUGOSLAV DEMANDS SUPPORTING RIGHTS AND PROTECTION OF SLOVENIAN AND CROATIAN MINORITIES IN AUSTRIA AND FOR "FULFILLMENT OF OTHER OUTSTANDING OBLIGATIONS OF REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA TOWARD YUGOSLAVIA--SUCH AS RETURN OF ARCHIVAL WEALTH AND CULTURAL RICHES PLUNDERED BY NAZI OCCUPIERS... WHICH NOW REST IN AUSTRIA". THESE OBLIGATIONS ARE A "CONSTATNT CONCERN" OF YUGOSLAVIA. "IF AUSTRIA GOVERNMENT REALLY WANTS.. SOLUTION TO POINTS OF CONFLICT, NO ONE PREVENTS ITS ATTESTING THIS. IN THIS REGARD A PRACTICAL STEP, FULFILLMENT OF ONE OF THESE OBLIGATIONS IS WORTH MORE THAN ALL STATEMENTS BY... AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT REGARDING READINESS FOR TALKS." MINIC CONCLUDED "IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT THIS WOULD GREATLY CONTRIBUTE TO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF MUTUAL RELATIONS".

2. IN POSSIBLE COUNTERPOINT TO MINIC SPEECH, YUGOSLAVS OFFICIALLY REJECTED AUSTRIAN REPLY TO THEIR NOTE IN NEW LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NOTE PRESENTED TO AUSTRIAN AMBASSADOR HERE DEC 27.

YUGOSLAV NOTE REJECTED IN PARTICULAR AUSTRIAN ASSERTION THAT AUSTRIAN GOVT HAD "FULFILLED AND EVEN OVERFULFILLED" ITS STATE TREATY OBLIGATIONS TOWARD SLOVENIAN AND CROATIAN MINORITIES, AND CALLED AUSTRIAN REPLY "AN ATTEMPT TO REVISE THE STATE TREATY, THE RESULT OF THE VICTORY OF THE ALLIED FORCES IN WORLD WAR II". MOST REMAINING RHETORIC IN NOTE CONSISTENT WITH RECENT EXTREME TONE OF YUGOSLAV COMMENTARY. HOWEVER, NOTE ALSO CONTAINED STATEMENT "YUGOSLAV GOVT WILL APPRECIATE EVERY CONCRETE EFFORT IN NEIGHBORING AUSTRIA TO DEVELOP COOPERATION WITH YUGOSLAVIA" IN EVIDENT REINFORCEMENT OF MINIC CALL ABOVE FOR "PRACTICAL STEP" BY AUSTRIANS.

3. COMMENT: MINIC PLEA FOR FULFILLMENT OF "ONE OF THESE OBLIGATIONS" MAY INDICATE YUGOSLAV WILLINGNESS TO COOL THE CONFLICT ON BASIS OTHER THAN IMMEDIATE CONCESSIONS ON MINORITY ISSUE. AUSTRIAN AMB HERE SHARES OUR VIEW THAT THIS IS FIRST SIGN OF FLEXIBILITY IN WHAT TO DATE HAS BEEN COMPLETELY ADAMANT STANCE. HE HAD PLANNED TO INDICATE THIS TO THE AUSTRIAN FONOFF UNTIL THE OFFICIAL YUGOSLAV REJECTION OF THE AUSTRIAN REPLY. IT WOULD NOT BE INCONSISTENT WITH THEIR NORMAL OPERATING METHODS FOR THE YUGOSLAVS TO PUT FORTH A POSSIBLE "OUT" FOR THE AUSTRIANS AS IN THE MINIC SPEECH, AND THEN CAMOUFLAGE IT IN AN AVALANCE OF VERBIAGE AS REPRESENTED BY THE DDC 27 NOTE AND THE CONTINUING MEDIA CAMPAIGN. HOPEFULLY THE AUSTRIANS WILL BE SENSITIVE TO THIS AND NOT MISS A POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY TO COOL THIS PROBLEM.
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